

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 03540 111643Z

62

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-10 EB-07 COME-00 AID-05 TRSE-00

SP-02 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02

USIA-15 PRS-01 /061 W

----- 002081

R 111620Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9319

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

UNCLAS TUNIS 3540

RABAT FOR AGATT

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, TS

SUBJ: TUNISIAN CEREALS CROP

REF: TUNIS 751 AND 867

1. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HASSAN BELKHOJA INFORMED AMBASSADOR JUNE 10 THAT CEREALS CROP FOR 1974/75 WILL PROBABLY BE SLIGHTLY BELOW 1.2 MILLION METRIC TONS. BELKHOJA STRESSED THAT THIS WOULD BE RECORD CEREAL HARVEST SINCE SOME ESTIMATES IN EARLIER YEARS (NOTABLY 1972) HAD INCLUDED SOME OTHER SEED CROPS UNDER CEREALS.

2. BELKHOJA NOTED THAT EXTREMELY GOOD HARVEST WAS RESULT OF VERY FAVORABLE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS FOLLOWING DROUGHT EARLY IN THE SEASON. HE ALSO TOOK PARTIAL CREDIT BY HAVING URGED FARMERS TO PROCEED WITH PLANTING AT CRITICAL TIME AND ADOPTING ENERGETIC POLICIES TO ASSURE DISTRIBUTION OF FERTILIZERS AND WEEDICIDES. NOT ONLY WAS THERE HEAVY AND SUSTAINED RAINFALL BEGINNING IN FEBRUARY, HE SAID, BUT WEATHER REMAINED COOL THROUGH MOST OF GROWING SEASON ASSURING FULL DEVELOPMENT OF SEED HEADS AND VERY HIGH

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PAGE 02 TUNIS 03540 111643Z

PER HECTARE YIELDS. LOCAL PRESS AND INDEPENDENT SOURCES

HAVE CONFIRMED GOOD HARVEST WITH APPARENT DAMAGE TO
BARLEY CROP IN MUCH OF SOUTH LARGELY OFFSET BY ABOVE-
AVERAGE YIELDS IN CENTRAL AREA.

3. BELKHOJA SAID THAT TUNISIA WOULD STILL IMPORT BREAD
WHEAT AND PROBABLY SOME BARLEY BECAUSE OF INCREASING
DEMANDS FOR LIVESTOCK FEEDING. HE DID NOT, HOWEVER,
ESTIMATE QUANTITIES INVOLVED.
SEELYE

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To: STATE
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